

Great Is Thy Faithfulness

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[0 : 00] This morning in the Word of God, get your Bibles open, Lamentations chapter number 3. The last two Sundays we've kind of gotten into a series I'm calling One-Liners from the Prophets.

There are certain verses, certain phrases that we are very familiar with in most cases. And in some cases you don't know why you know it or where it's from. And often times there's just these certain verses, these certain things, even just a phrase pulled out of an entire passage that really has a ring to it or just has a little kick.

And there's one today that I'd like to study out here from Lamentations 3. This is Jeremiah the prophet and him lamenting over the judgment of God against his people in captivity.

And these are some very sorrowful passages. They even have application prophetically to the tribulation, the remnant of the tribulation. But here Jeremiah is lamenting and crying out to God.

And some months ago I preached a message from this chapter that I titled There is Hope. Because in verse 18 Jeremiah said that my strength and my hope is perished from the Lord.

[1 : 17] And then he recalls something in verse 21. This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope. And so in that message we saw that hope returned when it was a desperate situation for him, a terrible situation for him.

He thought about something. He meditated upon a truth and then hope sprang up alive again inside of him. And what was it that he recalled?

What he recalled was verse 22. It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning.

Great is thy faithfulness. What Jeremiah realized in this land of captivity, in not living in his hometown, and not being able to go to the temple, or to be able to pilgrimage at those yearly sacrifices and feasts that God has established for his people, all of this was taken away from him.

And he's in a land, a foreign place in Babylon, and he's saying, wait a minute, we're not consumed. Wait a minute, God has left a remnant of his people to himself.

[2 : 31] Wait a minute, this is bad, but God's not done with us. God's not done with me. God did this on purpose. God's punishing our iniquity.

But he's not going to let that be forever. This isn't the end of us. While he looked on his situation, there's no hope for us. And then he thought, wait a minute. God, you are merciful to us.

We're not consumed. We're alive. We're actually thriving in this land. And it's only going to be for 70 years. And Jeremiah is the one that reveals that in his prophecies.

And we're going to go back. And God's going to bring us back into his land. And he says, God, you are merciful. You haven't left off your compassions toward us.

While I was just fussing about how bad it was, I have to realize, I have to acknowledge, even in your judgment, you're merciful. And you have compassion. And your mercies are new every morning.

[3 : 34] Every morning that I wake up, I'm reminded that God has something yet for me. An intention that he has yet to fulfill through his people. We're not through.

There's light ahead. They say there's better days a-coming. And why did Jeremiah realize this? Because he realized that God is faithful to his word. He realized God's a faithful God.

And he makes this proclamation in verse 23. This one liner that we know and we sing. And everybody that's ever walked into a church seems to know these four words. Great is thy faithfulness.

Great is thy faithfulness. Jeremiah is not saying, Lord, you are faithful. But rather, this is his description of God's faithfulness. Declaring that his faithfulness is great.

Not just good. Not just happy that you're faithful. Not just thanks for being there for me. Not just I'm glad. But rather, God, your mercies. Your compassion to us. Your faithfulness is great.

[4 : 36] Great is thy faithfulness. This morning, the message is great. It's thy faithfulness. It almost sounds too simple. But there's something to it. And so let's study this out in the word of God.

And consider the faithfulness of our God this morning. Lord, as we come before you, we come humbly. We come only because of the Lord Jesus Christ. Only because we're accepted in him.

Only because his blood was shed to cover our sins. And Lord, we're an unrighteous people on our own. We're full of flesh. Our days are few. And God, you're eternal.

It's hard to fathom you. It's hard to come before you and talk to you when considering how different we truly are. And how great you are. And how weak we are.

And how foolish we are. And how sinful we are. How holy you are. But Lord, as we enter into this time and we scan these truths and we search into your word.

[5 : 34] I pray that your spirit would bear witness to them. And that you would be glorified in your word. And that our hearts would look to you and would worship you. And that we'd submit ourselves to you.

And Lord, that we'd reciprocate then your faithfulness. And that we'd in turn dedicate ourselves, devote ourselves to being faithful to you. I pray this in Jesus' name.

Amen. Great is thy faithfulness. Let me say four things this morning about this thought. And first of all, I want to say that there is the expectation that God's faithfulness be great.

You say, why? Why would we expect his faithfulness to be great? Well, because God is great. And everything about him is great. And let me just show that to you. Come back to Psalm 86.

And there's too many of these scriptures to take the time this morning. The Bible says in Psalm 48, verse 1, Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised.

[6 : 38] It's just fitting that if we're going to praise our God, we praise him greatly because he is great. And here in Psalm 86, take a look at verse 10.

For thou art great and doest wondrous things. Thou art God alone. Thou art great. Look at Psalm 95.

I'll just give you a few here in a row. Psalm 95 and verse 3. The Bible says, For the Lord is a great God and a great King above all gods.

Amen. The Lord is a great God. Look at Psalm 96, verse number 4. For the Lord is great and greatly to be praised.

He is to be feared above all gods. Psalm 99, verse 3. Let them praise thy great and terrible name, for it is holy.

[7 : 43] And anything we search and study of God is going to reveal greatness. Look at Psalm 104. Psalm 104, verse 1. Bless the Lord, O my soul.

O Lord my God. Thou art very great. Thou art clothed with honor and majesty. This psalm just gets it on for a little while.

It's a good one to read. There is the expectation that God's faithfulness be great because God himself is great. I would expect nothing less of any one of his attributes.

But greatness. The Bible describes his attributes. Great power. It describes great mercy. I ran these scriptures this week.

It took me a while. There is great kindness he has. He appeared in the Old Testament in a fire. No, not just a fire. A great fire. And he spake with a voice.

[8 : 41] Not just a voice. You know what it was? It was a great voice. The Bible says that he displays his greatness. By his many great acts. By his many great works.

By great miracles. By great terrors. The Bible says he has great anger. And that he has great indignation. And he gives great blessing and great deliverance.

We read it in the Psalms. He has a great name. The Bible says that he has great love. Wherewith he loved us. And giving his son. He has given unto us exceeding great and precious promises.

Everything connected to this God is great. Because thou Lord art great. There is the expectation that his faithfulness be great also. Why? Why is his faithfulness great?

Because everything about him is great. The Bible says that he fills heaven and earth. He is great in size. His judgments are unsearchable.

[9 : 41] And his ways past finding out. Why? Because he is great in wisdom. And great in knowledge. In the Bible he is adored. And worshipped and praised in heaven with these words.

Great and marvelous are thy works. Lord God Almighty. He is described in this book as being great in glory.

As being great in holiness. As being sovereign and unstoppable. It is no surprise that in describing his faithfulness. We have used the word great.

There is the expectation that God's faithfulness be great. Secondly though there is the evidence. That God's faithfulness is great. It is evidenced in so many ways.

And in this I will just say while we are in Lamentations 3. It is evidenced by contrasting God's faithfulness to man's faithfulness. Man's faithfulness to God in this passage is even whether you see it or not.

[10 : 41] It is displayed in the fact that he is in affliction. What does that tell us? Well first of all look in verse 1. I am a man that hath seen affliction by the rod of his wrath. Down in verse 15 just to skim it.

He hath filled me with bitterness. In verse 17 it says that thou hast removed my soul far off from peace. I forget prosperity. Man, Jews, Jeremiah is in captivity and lamenting.

Because the nation of Israel didn't remain faithful to God. Yet God was faithful to his word. And he laid it out for him.

If you'll follow me. If you'll heed my words and obey my statutes and commands then I'll bless you. And we've read of this before already. Recently in Deuteronomy 28. He gives the list of all the blessings that he intends to pour out upon his people.

If they'll keep his covenant. And if they refuse the covenant. He explained it a fourth time. You'll be cursed in all of those things. Exactly the way I bless you.

[11 : 41] I will curse you. I will destroy you. I will judge you. The fact that is displayed here is faithfulness is great. It's evidenced. In this passage. Seeing man's faithfulness to him. Man's being judged.

Well he didn't remain very faithful. But God was in fact faithful to his word. Israel rejected the blessings of God. And this passage reveals their mess up.

The Bible says in Psalm 5 verse 9. Speaking of wicked men. It says there's no faithfulness in their mouth. We're contrasting God's faithfulness to man's faithfulness. And this is evidence.

It yields this truth that God's faithfulness is great. Because man's faithfulness is so slim. In Psalm 12 verse 1. The faithful fail among the children of men.

The Bible says in that passage. Help Lord. Help. The godly man ceaseth. I can't find one. The faithful fail among the children of men. But when we contrast man's with God's.

[12 : 42] God's is great. In Deuteronomy chapter 7 and verse 9. Describing God's faithfulness on the other hand. The Bible says. He's the Lord thy God.

He is God. And he calls himself the faithful God. The Bible says his faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds. One author said. There is many a believer who forsakes God.

But there's never a believer whom God forsakes. Great is thy faithfulness. It's evidenced. There's evidence that God's faithfulness is great.

It's evidence when contrasting his faithfulness with man's faithfulness. But it's also evidenced in this. By analyzing the times that he wasn't faithful. God's great faithfulness is evidenced by analyzing the time that he wasn't faithful.

So turn in your Bibles to. Yeah. Where are we going to go?

[13 : 43] To analyze where God wasn't faithful. I just have a blank spot in my notes here. I don't know what to say. If I could maybe pause here and wait 30 seconds.

Maybe we'll insert it on the track. We'll put crickets. While we all just sit here and ponder. When was God not faithful to his word?

Great is thy faithfulness. And how do we know? The evidence is that he's never going against himself. He's never let man down. The Bible says God is not a man that he should lie.

Neither the son of man that he should repent. Hath he said and shall he not do it? Or hath he spoken and shall he not make it good? Better believe it.

He's a faithful God and he boasts himself. I can't find a time when God wasn't faithful to what he said. I only find evidence of his faithfulness. In the scripture he's called a faithful witness.

[14 : 41] He's called a faithful creator. Jesus Christ is called a faithful high priest. He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins. And to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

The Bible says his words are faithful and true. And in Revelation 19 when pictured riding upon a white horse. He's got a name. And with a capital F his name is faithful.

Faithful. Great is thy faithfulness. Jeremiah is sitting in a mess here. He's seen affliction. He is forgetting about prosperity in his land.

He's no peace in his heart. Just bitterness and sorrow. But he still can't think of a time when God wasn't faithful either. Great is thy faithfulness.

What a statement coming out of sorrow. It's not coming out of prosperity. It's not Americans being rich and saying, God, you're so good to us. He's in poverty.

[15 : 42] He's in poverty. In a wreck. Discouraged. But has to admit it. Because he can't find a time when God wasn't faithful. There's evidence that God's faithfulness is great.

Thirdly, let's consider the extent of God's great faithfulness. How long does it last? Is there an expiration on the faithfulness of God?

Is there an end? And I'll say this. The faithfulness of God, the extent of it is as long as he's God. Great is his faithfulness. In Psalm 90 verse 2, the Bible says, From everlasting to everlasting thou art God.

And as long as he's God, his faithfulness exists greatly. It's eternal. That's how great it is. Turn with me to the New Testament later, to the back there, to James chapter 1.

Let's read a verse or two. James chapter 1. And just see a few things about God and his nature and character.

[16 : 55] And why his faithfulness is great. The extent of it. In verse 17, James writes, James 1, 17, Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

The word we use, the doctrinal term there to describe him, is that he is immutable. He's unchanging. Because with him, with whom is no variableness.

If God was faithful in the past, he'll be faithful in the future. Because great is thy faithfulness. He's unchanging. Neither shadow of turning. Turn a few pages back to Hebrews chapter 6.

Hebrews chapter 6. And Lotus, we'll just read verse 17.

It says, Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, that we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge, to lay hold upon the hope set before us, which hope we have as an anchor for the soul both sure and steadfast.

[18 : 21] What are we studying? The immutability of God. It's the immutability of his counsel, his word. And it says in verse 18, that by two immutable things. Well, what would those two immutable things be?

They are his person and his word. And speaking of him swearing by an oath. So look at verse 13. For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself.

And that's something that's immutable. Something that is impossible. That it changes. He swore by himself. The oath, he swore by his person. And then there's the oath and the promise in verse 14.

And then in verse 16, for men verily swear by the greater. And an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife, wherein God willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs his promise, the immutability of his counsel.

He wanted to show how his word cannot change either. The immutability of his counsel, he confirmed it by an oath. The oath about himself. Those two immutable things in verse 18 is his person and his word.

[19 : 30] He's a faithful God. Look at chapter 10 and verse 23. Hebrews 10 verse 23. A great little phrase tucked in here. In parenthesis, 10 23, let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering, because God doesn't change.

God doesn't waver. Notice, for he is faithful, that promised. He is faithful, that promised. And that's exactly what Jeremiah was pondering, that very thought, in captivity, was God made promises to us.

God's not going to trash us and toss us forever aside, because faithful is he that promised. The Bible says, faithful is he that calleth you who also will do it.

Paul says, the Lord is faithful who shall establish you and keep you from evil. In 2 Timothy 2, he said, he abideth, faithful, present tense, his existence, he abideth, faithful.

He can't change. He won't change. To that I say, great is thy faithfulness. It will not change. The extent of God's faithfulness, as long as he's God, and God the eternal God, that cannot change, and will not change, will remain faithful.

[20 : 55] And then finally then, the effect, the effect of God's great faithfulness. What effect does or should God's great faithfulness have or yield in your life?

In your life. Because he's never let you down. Am I right about that? Because he's never let you down. Should you let him down?

Because he's never lied to you. Should you be allowed to lie to him? What effect does his faithfulness have in your life? Because he careth for you. Should you not care for him or for what he desires for you?

He is faithful. And will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able. Isn't that what the Bible says? He's faithful when you're tempted to make a way of escape that you may be able to bear it?

He's faithful. And he always has been and he always will keep his words. So, considering his great faithfulness and his great faithfulness to you, how can you not feel obligated to reciprocate that faithfulness to him?

[22 : 04] How can you not feel obligated as his child washed in the blood of Jesus Christ from your sins, from your violations of his word, that he'll just wash them away and forgive them because of Jesus Christ and because he's kept his word to you and will keep his word to you in taking you and all those promises of your future.

And if you stand in this church today at complete peace and rest with God, knowing of a certainty that you're saved, have full assurance and confident, as Paul says, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it, how can you not feel obligated to be faithful to him?

How is it that you can so quickly dismiss what he wants you to do or what he says is right for you or for your family? How can you just neglect church attendance?

How can you so quickly neglect reading his word and being faithful to him? How can you neglect fellowship with him when he has not one time been unfaithful to you?

There ought to be an effect. If you realize and have tasted of his faithfulness, you should be obligated to live in love and in loyalty to him, to live, to come before his throne daily standing at allegiance, offering your faithful service to him, thankful and humble and ready and faithful.

[23 : 47] What if this morning we could measure your faithfulness to God? Would we call it great? How quickly can you be turned aside from following him?

How easy is it for you to decide against what he would say is right? How easy is it for you to quit? What does it take? Does it take a little bit of money?

An employer that says, I could really use you? Does it take a girl that bats her eyes at you? A boy? A friend?

That wants your attention? Wants you to go places with them? How easy is it to toss your faithfulness to him aside?

This morning you can acknowledge and admit he has never done that to you. He has never not kept his word to you. And it ought to be reciprocated.

[24 : 54] There's more Christians that are faithful today to their employers than they are to God. There's more parents that are faithful to their children and to their temporary happiness than they are to God.

There's more Christians that make choices all the time that display who they are faithful to. And oftentimes it's themselves.

Oftentimes they get the first choice, the priority. They satisfy their flesh first. They satisfy their desires.

And sometimes, you know, they just make this noble excuse. It was about the family. It was about the kids. It was about this. It was about that. But there ought to be an effect.

When we study and consider God's great faithfulness, the effect ought to be it should show up in your life as faithful to him. You ought to be faithful to the ways of God.

[25 : 52] And just as Jeremiah sat in affliction and he sat in turmoil and he considered, in those words we didn't read, the beginning of that chapter in Lamentations 3, he was just fussing.

How bad he had it. But hope sprang alive within his heart when he remembered that God had promised some things to his people and that God was going to fulfill all that he had promised.

Just like that case today, Christian, if you've believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, you can live in the same hope today that there are things God has promised and if you don't know them, you need to get to know them.

That is, you need to know this. You ought to have a verse. You ought to have a handful of verses. But at the very least, you ought to have something in that book that has spoken to you that you've held on to and said, I know God's faithful and true and that's for me and I'm going to hang on to that.

That's going to get me through because I know it's true. I wrote a few down and these just mean something to me. Maybe not so much to you, but you'll recognize some of these are very common.

[27 : 00] Some things that God promised and has offered or ordered to us. And one is that we're accepted in the beloved. You know, I know who I am inside, a bit of me.

I know I'm just a filthy wretch, but according to that Bible, because of Christ, God has accepted me in his son, Jesus Christ. Now, he's not accepting me.

He's not accepting the dirt bag, the liar, the thief. He's not accepting the filthy thinker and think, but he's accepting me on the merits of the Lord Jesus Christ.

That little phrase that's in Ephesians chapter 1, that means something to me. He hath made us accepted in the beloved. You know how many people are trying to get accepted with God, trying to find acceptance, doing things, working, trying to show it?

And I found it. And I rest in that. I'm not trying to prove to him anything. I'm accepted. Praise the Lord for that. Hebrews 13, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.

[28 : 07] Well, that's one we all like. That's a pure testament to his faithfulness to us. That's one you ought to hang on to. I quoted this earlier.

He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. Here's one. We shall not all sleep, but we shall be changed. And we run some references.

We've done it already in here. The change that we're going to have. And when our vile body is going to be fashioned like unto his glorious body. When God's going to give this mortal body immortality.

This finite, frail piece of clay. Something far better, Paul says. The Bible says, Thou art no more a servant but a son.

And if a son, then an heir of God. Through Christ. That's a promise. I'm counting on that. I'm counting that I'm going to inherit some things.

[29 : 07] Some things that he has established and planned for my future. And he promised to me, declared it to me. And I'm holding on to it. And so you know why? One of the reasons I hold on to it, where I care about that.

It's because I'm not looking at this stuff down here saying, Well, I want that. I want to get more of that. I want to get one of those. I want to have all of this. Because I know he said, I've got something up there.

I'm going to hold on to that one. Who delivered us from so great a death and doth deliver. And whom we trust that he will yet deliver us.

My God is faithful. And I trust that he will yet deliver me. I believe it. I believe that one day that the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout.

With the voice of the archangel. With the trump of God. And we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds. To meet the Lord in the air. And so shall we ever be with the Lord.

[30 : 10] And I'm hanging on to that one too. I believe that day is coming. And I'm holding on to that. And I'm clinging to it. Because it reminds me. I know the faithfulness of God.

I've experienced it. I've studied it. And I trust it. And I know he's coming back one day. I know he promised it. And faithful is he. And he abideth faithful.

I wonder if you have a verse that you can cling to. That declares and reminds you of the great faithfulness of God. You're going to struggle in this life with sin. You're going to struggle with your flesh.

You're going to struggle with obeying his word. You're going to struggle with sometimes fears of taking a step. Of following him. Or of surrendering to him. And you'll struggle with relationships.

With family. With friends. With co-workers. With just people. With just life. You're going to struggle in these ways. One day you're going to struggle to take your last breath. That'll be a real struggle.

[31 : 09] You haven't felt it yet, have you? But one day that day's coming. When the air is leaving your body. And you can't keep it in. And you know it's over.

It's over. And I'm gone. When you're struggling. You can remember. That God is faithful.

You can die. Believing. That God is faithful. Great is thy faithfulness. God hasn't forgotten. About you.

Or about what he's promised you. He knows your name. He knows your works. He knows your heart. He knows your thoughts. He knows your sins. He knows your struggles. And one day he's going to have plans to make it all go away.

Forever. He's going to give you eternal life. In an immortal body. He's going to allow you to dwell in a holy place. A place with everlasting joy and peace.

[32 : 11] Where you can forever be. With who the Bible calls the great God and our Savior. The Lord Jesus Christ. D.L. Moody said this.

He said, God never made a promise that was too good to be true. Never. He never made a promise too good to be true. And how do we know?

Well, that all hinges upon one thing. Upon how faithful is he to his word. How faithful of a God is he? I'm pleased to declare it to you this morning.

Great is thy faithfulness. Our God's faithfulness is great. But just knowing that and hearing that.

That can soothe your soul. That can tickle your ears. That can make you feel good. But what effect has his faithfulness then had in your heart and in your life?

[33 : 09] How devoted are you to him? How committed are you to him? We're supposed to be translated. Lost the word.

Romans 12. What is it? Verse 2. Transforming. Transforming. We're supposed to be transformed. By the renewing of our mind. We're supposed to change from this sinner and this carnal guy that just wants his own stuff and his own way.

Into a different man. Into a new man. And put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ. And make no provision for the flesh to fulfill the lust thereof. We're supposed to be transformed.

This is part of the transformation is your faithfulness to him. As becoming like him. Is displaying his attributes through you. If it's him in you, Christ in you. And if he's in you, he's going to start showing that side.

The fruit of the spirit is going to show up. One of them is faith. I wonder this morning. Can you analyze and weigh and measure your faithfulness to him? You may think, well, I'm faithful to my family, to my kids, to taking care of them.

[34 : 23] I've never cheated on my spouse. I don't lie or hide things from them. You might start looking on these earthly relationships. And lost people are faithful too.

Well, this is evidence of God being inside you. His great faithfulness. And the priority is to be faithful to him first. And as you're faithful to him and obeying him and following his will and word, those earthly relationships get put in the very right place every time.

I wonder if you're committed to him. I wonder if you're committed to him the way he's committed to you. Let's bow our heads together. Great is thy faithfulness. It's not just a statement. It's a truth.

It's a fact. But it ought to have an effect. There's a cause and effect this morning. How faithful are you to God? God has planted you in this local church.

How faithful are you to this local church? Do you believe in it? Do you see it as this is what God wants me to do and be a part of? Or is it just when it's convenient to you?

[35 : 26] When it feels right, then I'll be faithful. Are you faithful to giving? Are you faithful to giving back to him as he's blessed you? Is that something, a part of your Christian life?

I'm not calling for your money this morning at all. I don't want your money. But God does. God wants your heart. He wants to see that he has your heart. He wants you to be faithful to him.

He ought to see it. He ought to see you displaying faithfulness to him in your time, with your talents, with your treasures.

This morning I'd ask you to bow and talk to your God. God acknowledges faithfulness to you in your life. Acknowledge he'll be faithful to you in your death and in your future.

And perhaps if he's impressing you, commit this morning to being faithful to him. Commit this morning. Acknowledge you're slipping.

[36 : 34] You're allowing things you shouldn't be allowing. You've justified things. He hasn't gotten first place. But he deserves it.

Father, Lord, as we close this service this morning, I pray that what was said was received. That you'd be glorified in it. That your people would seek to be devoted and to humbly present themselves before you daily.

God, so often we get distracted. This world is screaming for our attention. Our flesh will not go away. But Lord, this morning, help us to commit to you to be faithful to you.

Faithful in the areas of life that we can and making greater attempts where we think we can't. And Lord, I just pray that your people would obey your spirit as he moves in their hearts.

Have your way. We pray this in Jesus' name. Please join me in standing number 40 in the hymnal. I invite you to come and pray.